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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CCA AND EUR/NCE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL PESSIMISTIC ON CHANGE IN CUBA

REF: HAVANA 1096

Classified By: Mary T. Curtin, Political Counselor for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Emboffs met with Daniel Gromann, Deputy Director of the MFA's Americas Division, and until August 2007, Poland's Charge d'Affaires in Havana. Gromann spent six years in Havana, and was Charge for his final two years. He played an instrumental role with respect to setting up the video conference between Cuban dissidents in Havana with former Polish President and Solidarity leader Lech Walesa in early ¶2006. For his efforts in keeping in contact with dissidents, Gromann was harassed by Cuban authorities, including threats leveled against his young son.

¶2. (C) Gromann gave the Warsaw readout of Americas Division Chief Andrzej Jaroszynski's recent visit to Havana (reftel) to examine new property to relocate the Polish embassy. On Poland's relationship with Cuba, Gromann described very limited political engagement, but said that Poland's economic and investment policies would be in line with that of the European Union in not seeking to prohibit trade and investment. Nonetheless, actual Poland-Cuba trade is quite small (septel report on Libertad Act to follow). He added that he hoped the new Polish Embassy would be able to provide expanded internet availability to the dissident community, a big focus of EU missions in Havana. He praised the efforts of the USINT and the Canadian Embassy in this regard. He said that embassy staff had been expanded to include a new officer nominally in charge of public affairs, who would spend most of her time working with the dissident community. He hoped that under Ambassador Marzenna Adamczyk, Polish diplomats would have greater opportunities to travel outside of Havana and meet dissidents elsewhere on the island.

¶3. (C) Gromann expressed pessimism that Cuba was undergoing any kind of meaningful transition as power shifted from Fidel to Raul Castro, pointing to a speech made by Raul Castro in July 2007. Gromann said that the speech was received by hardliners as evidence of little meaningful change, but by moderates as pointing to possible relaxation of the government's control of the Cuban people. Gromann offered that depending on an individual's perspective, anyone could find something in the speech to support their underlying view. He added that he did not believe that any meaningful change could come to Cuba before Fidel Castro has been buried.  
HILLAS